

## 2021 WERA Meeting Notes

Due to COVID-related travel restrictions, WERA 1010 met virtually on February 18 and 19, 2021.

February 18 session – started at 9:00 am MST

Introductions of participants (due to the nature of the meeting we had participants in and out of the WebEx throughout the day). The list includes individuals who participated at some point over the two days.

Abbey Hammell – University of Minnesota  
Billy McKim – Texas A&M University  
Brook Thiel – North Dakota State University  
Courtney Flint – Utah State University  
Don Dillman – Washington State University  
Edem Avemegah – Utah State University  
Michele Walsh – University of Arizona  
Ginny Lesser Oregon State University  
Glenn Israel – University of Florida  
Hua Qin – University of Missouri  
Jason McKibben – Auburn University  
Jessica Goldberger - Washington State University  
Jessica Schad - Utah State University  
Kenny Wallen – University of Idaho  
Melissa Constantine – University of Minnesota  
Steve Swinford – Montana State University  
Todd Rockwood - University of Minnesota  
Vicki McCracken - Washington State University  
Zhengyuan Zhu – Iowa State University

Meeting date for 2022 has been set. February 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> at the Tucson Inn Suites. Contract was signed shortly after meeting. More information will follow about 3 months out from meeting.

Vicki McCracken spoke about WERA proposals. Our current project runs through 9/30/2023. Discussion of some future directions she has noticed serving on reviews. Many changes, especially in how extension is being structured. Expansions in human health areas has been a recent shift.

### Reports

Jessica Schad - Utah State

Presented on 2020 and 2021 UT COVID and Science Online Panel Survey

2021 – SD Producer Sustainability Resurvey – had both mail and online modes and is longitudinal. Incentives used - \$2 bill vs 1 in 10 chance at \$100 cash card

2021 – CBW Stakeholder Surveys - had both mail and online modes

Courtney Flint- Utah State

COVID-related issues – can't do public intercept or drop-off/pick-up surveys

Overall participation seems down

2021 watershed priority project – switched from face to face to zoom interviews

2020 and 2021 – Utah Online wellbeing surveys in partnership with 30 municipalities

2020 and 2021 – Online survey of city and county leaders on COVID impacts

A panel of 200+ is being built out of this for use in future studies

Wellbeing – average decline in self-rated personal well-being of 43% in past year for rural, 44% for urban dwellers. Largest declines were perceived in social connections, cultural opportunities, and mental health.

Hua Qin – University of Missouri

Changing Risk Perception and Behavior in Response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019

Focus of work on exploring the dynamic relationships between risk perception and behavior in response to COVID-19.

Hypotheses about risk perception and future behavior were discussed. Motivation, Accuracy, and Reappraisal Hypotheses.

Data was collected in Seattle, Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York City.

Three waves: March 6-16, March 27-April 14, and July 9-August 7.

Around 500 responses per city, per round.

Midwest data from Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Illinois, and Arkansas.

Four time frames: March 9-June 9, March 9-April 30, May 19-June 1, and July 13-31.

Measured perceptions of local severity, perceived likelihood of infection, perceived harmfulness of infection, and level of anxiety. Also, satisfaction with management entities.

Results supported reappraisal hypothesis – actions changed over time.

Ginny Lesser – Oregon State

Discussion of Oregon DOT study – no changes to design and response rate over last two administrations: 2018 was 21% and 2020 was 24%

Study 2: Sample size of 7500. No changes to design and response rate over last two administrations: 2018 was 19% and 2020 was 27%

Can the Non-Probability Panels be useful in surveys of general population? Questions of interest include comparison of responses of probability and panel respondents and comparison of demographics of probability and panel respondents.

The panels appear to not generate estimates within the confidence interval of the sample data. In 2106, 57% were outside of the confidence limits of the probability sample. 2018: 44% were outside of the confidence limits of the probability sample. 2020: 50% were outside of the confidence limits of the probability sample. Overall, panel data is not the same.

With respect to demographics, panelists differed from sample participants across multiple demographic categories.

Tragedy of the Commons and surveys discussion. This group started work on this in 2019 and conducted a diary project in 2020. In general, the discuss/concern centers on the increase in survey requests from marketers, researchers, etc. that has the potential to change/spoil/destroy the landscape in which academic survey methodology operates. Discussion lasted for about an hour and touched on the challenges that exist moving forward. Another point was the general “deskilling” that has occurred because everyone thinks they can throw a survey together, especially online, and produce quality data. Don Dillman shared slides about a smartphone app and survey focused on those who were in the process of being vaccinated against COVID. At the time, most of those receiving vaccines were older and smartphone ownership for the group is about 50 percent. Don used this as an example of issues we find in current survey techniques.

Friday, February 18<sup>th</sup>

Zhengyuan Zhu - Iowa State

Survey Research Service worked on 49 surveys including web surveys, mail surveys, telephone interviews, in-person interviews, observational data collection, and observational coding/mapping services.

Data Science Service - 3 large natural resources surveys: NRI, BLM, CEAP.

Faculty research related to surveys: ISBI: Integrating Social and Biophysical Indicators of Nutrient Reduction Progress in Iowa Watershed Projects and NSF S&CC: Overcoming the Rural Data Deficit to Improve Quality of Life and Community Service.

Don Dillman – Washington State

Paper – Towards Survey Response Rate Theories That No Longer Pass Each Other Like Strangers in the Night. Most theories are singularly focused, but survey response depends upon linking multiple influences on design together. Most theories were developed before the Internet. Conceptually the theories ignore one another, and that needs to come to an end. Need to attend to all of these influences: Survey modes, Survey sponsorship, Response task, Incentives, Structure of requests to respond, Communication content, Attributes of potential respondents. Article on converting mail to web responses. A conditional post-incentive was successful, but pre-incentive for changing was not. Helps set basis for combined use of pre and post incentives.

Thirty years of survey methodology in the American Association for Public Opinion Research – book is on the AAPOR website. ([https://www.aapor.org/About-Us/History/A-Meeting-Place-and-More.aspx?utm\\_source=AAPOR-Infomz&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=default](https://www.aapor.org/About-Us/History/A-Meeting-Place-and-More.aspx?utm_source=AAPOR-Infomz&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=default)) “European Social Survey” of all member countries and challenges of adapting across countries.

A survey of Academic Survey Research Organizations - In December 2019 and early 2020 they contacted 66 AASRO organizations to ask about changes in how their surveys get done. 34 survey centers who conducted 2742 surveys 2017-2019 responded. Internet only (640) and mixed-mode (599) are now the most common response modes. Mail-only and telephone-only surveys have declined by half.

Glenn Israel – Florida

Client survey delayed until Fall 2021. Responses have been declining over time. Has a new experiment and determining other things to test as well. New publication in the Savvy Survey series ([https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic\\_series\\_savvy\\_survey](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_series_savvy_survey)).

Afternoon session – focus on talk Ginny Lesser delivered to Rotary Club of Corvallis following the 2020 election. Topic was on polling and accuracy/utility. Discussed history, response rate changes over time, declining telephone rates in particular. Discussed common sources of error and use of weighting to reflect known demographics.

Differential partisan response rates could be a factor in errors, as well as assumptions in likely voter models.

Meeting adjourned following closing discussion and planning for 2022 meeting.